



FOR PEOPLE, NATURE, AND THE ECONOMY  
February 23, 2005

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**Joint Policy Committee**

Joseph P. Bort MetroCenter

101 8th Street

Oakland, CA 94607

Dear Joint Policy Committee:

Redefining Progress is writing to support the MTC and Joint Policy Committee's steps toward connecting land use to transit, but my organization is concerned the proposed policy will not be effective. We urge you to strengthen the policy by adopting the Livable Communities Platform, which will help ensure good land use around transit stations.

We know that MTC is considering a policy that calls for a certain amount of housing and jobs along transit corridors as a measure for growth. While we applaud the focus on housing, Redefining Progress is concerned that the proposed policy leaves too much room for the possibility of poorly planned station areas. Setting a combined threshold for housing and jobs would allow cities to plan for offices and shops only, without sufficient housing. Also, a policy without specific land use and design guidelines could allow big-box stores and excessive parking, which destroy the pedestrian and bike environment. Furthermore, the current proposal does not address the need for housing affordable to families earning low incomes, the very people who need housing and use transit most.

We urge you to adopt the following Livable Communities Platform as part of a Regional Transit Oriented Development Policy. Before MTC funds transit expansion projects, cities should have to:

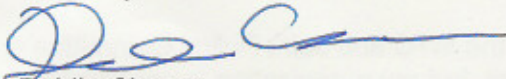
- Plan for a high threshold of housing along corridors, separate from a jobs threshold.
- Promote affordable housing in station areas.
- Create station area plans that include:
  - studies that analyze minimizing the space dedicated to parking,
  - bicycle and pedestrian plans for safe routes to and within station areas, and
  - blocks no more than 500 feet in length to ensure walkability.

Redefining Progress is eager to support a policy linking transportation funds to transit-supportive land use. We recently completed a study (available at [redefiningprogress.org](http://redefiningprogress.org)) examining the effects of a proposed transit-oriented development on sustainability in the City of Pleasanton. We found that new residents of transit-oriented development would drive 46% fewer miles than similar residents occupying more spread-out housing. Policies that support such development would result in fewer costs for local governments paying for

roads, health care associated with air pollution, and other costs associated with driving.

We urge you to include policy standards that will move the Bay Area towards a more sustainable future where transit is supported by areas where people will want to live, work, and play.

Sincerely,



Dahlia Chazan

Co-Director, Sustainability Indicators Program